

OK

A  
**PERSONAL STATEMENT**  
RELATING TO  
**THE FIRST CALL**  
TO  
**FORT MASSEY CONGREGATION,**  
**HALIFAX, N. S.**



HALIFAX, N. S. :  
PRINTED BY FOWLER & PATRICK, 25 SACKVILLE ST.  
1872.

A  
BX 9215  
. A34A7

[FOR PRIVATE CIRCULATION.]

---

## A PERSONAL STATEMENT

RELATING TO

### **THE FIRST CALL**

TO

**FORT MASSEY CONGREGATION, HALIFAX.**

---

To friends interested, and desirous of knowing the truth, I address this paper, believing that my conduct in connection with Fort Massey affairs has been misunderstood, misrepresented and slanderously reported. I consider that a simple statement of facts has become necessary. That no error in head or heart has been committed during the last three dreary months—I do not pretend to claim; but that I have been placed in circumstances of great trial and perplexity, and that throughout, keeping the good of Christ's kingdom first in view, I have tried humbly and earnestly to find and follow the path of duty, I hope to be able to make plain.

Nearly two years ago I left Windsor congregation, which, locally, socially and financially stands among the first in the Church, left a deeply attached and harmonious people, and came to Halifax. Chalmers' congregation stood historically and ecclesiastically second to none within the bounds of the Synod, but at that time was in a disheartened and some-

what depressed condition. In accepting the call, with Fort Massey project looming darkly in the distance, I made before the Presbytery, and in the hearing of many of the congregation, substantially this statement—"I accept this call not to the name of Chalmers' Church, nor to the building called Chalmers' Church, but to the people whose signatures are attached; and when the time comes that they shall separate, one section forming new church connections, and the other remaining or scattering, I shall hold myself free to go with those who go, stay with those who stay, or leave the city altogether, just as circumstances at the time may seem to justify. As to the future, I trust in Providence and in the honour of the men whose names are on the call." Without dissent on the part of Presbytery, or congregation, the translation was made and pastoral work begun.

Before coming to the city I had put the question—"What will be the effect of the new church movement on the old congregation?" and the answer given by a prominent member of the session was that it would not be seriously affected thereby. On visiting the congregation, and finding the locality of families, I was surprised and disappointed to find so large a proportion of the prominent members of the church living at the South-end,—that the congregation drew so little strength from the North, and that the tendency of population was so largely towards the West and South. For these reasons, and from the fact that the general opinion among members South was that the old church should be closed when the new congregation was formed, from the fact that few members from the North had any confidence in the existence of Chalmers' as a self-supporting church after the separation—from these facts and opinions I came to the conclusion that the old building must follow the recognized church-law of every growing city, and give way to the demands of business, while population should find accommodation for worship nearer home.

But while I held the opinion that the old church should be closed, for obvious reasons, I never advocated it.

The time for separation came; I instructed all parties to make their church connection independently of me; I claimed a sense of freedom, which was fully conceded to them. A meeting was called to decide on the policy to be adopted. With the expectation that the old church would be closed, a large majority of the meeting declared their determination to go South. A good deal has been said about the means used to weaken the old church party. It has been asserted that my name was used to induce parties to commit themselves to Fort Massey. On this point my knowledge is limited. I know of several members who did take certificates with the expectation that I was to be their Minister, but I also know of others who would prefer to worship in the new church, but who remained in the old till they could be made certain that I was to be removed. My own firm belief is that my name, if weight it had at all, was of as much use in strengthening the party who remained as the party going South,—and under the circumstances that was all either section had a right to claim.

On the formation of the new congregation it was found that a majority had come from Chalmers' church. The attachment and high sense of honour which led the section from Poplar Grove to secure the salary of their Pastor before they left induced the section from Chalmers' to endeavor to exercise their constitutional right in giving me a call; the motives were honourable in either case. Unworthy means have been charged against my friends in securing a majority. The following facts should take all force from such charge: 1. There are twenty members who could more conveniently worship in Fort Massey still in connection with the old church. 2. At the time of moderation in call, out of the fifty-six members on the new roll, only thirty-one were present. 3. All the names from the Poplar Grove section, except two, were forward at the formation of



the roll, while the names from the other section have been coming in gradually, swelling the number from forty-six, at the commencement of the roll, to upwards of sixty at the present time. The charge of canvassing therefore falls. If we take the section of the city which the new church was intended to accommodate, it will be found that the Chalmers' section have a majority of at least three to two. In self vindication these facts are stated. If I had believed that my friends in Fort Massey had acted in an unchristian manner towards their brethren in the old church, at the time of separation,—if I had been persuaded that they had dealt unfairly with their brethren from the other congregation in securing a majority—then verily I should have shared their guilt in allowing my name as a candidate. If they are blameworthy I am not free; I stand or fall with them.

Now, why did I permit my name to be mentioned as a candidate at Fort Massey when the results have proved so unhappy?

From statements made by prominent members in connection with Poplar Grove church, and from remarks and opinions made and expressed by parties in different church connections and sympathies, I feel quite prepared to say that all through the first year of my ministry in Halifax the very general opinion in town and country was that either the Pastor of Poplar Grove or Chalmers' would be called to the new church. Then, apart altogether from the inviting field of labor presented, it can be easily understood how I should look favorably on a call coming from a people from whom I had received nine-tenths of the personal favours experienced in the city, and who had shown an attachment so sincere and strong. Further, I felt that it was but my constitutional right. I never supposed till of late that my connection with Chalmers' church had brought such contamination as to unfit me for labor elsewhere. I believed and held that if the members of Fort Massey congregation who had come from Poplar

Grove proved to be a majority, and believed their Pastor to be the best fitted to occupy the post, it was their right and duty to call him,—and that he of all men in the church had the best right to the position; and I held the same doctrine to be sound when applied on the other side. Still more, I felt that to have so large a number of prominent members leave my congregation in a body, not for church extension—for the old church was not full—without showing any desire to take me with them, would be the most damaging vote of want of confidence ever passed on a Minister of the Gospel. Let it be noted further that there never was a time, after the formation of the new congregation, when I could have withdrawn my name, on the ground of opposition by the other party, without intensifying party feeling and bringing about the same results which have since appeared. But lastly, and chiefly, I never knew the character or extent of the opposition to my settlement till the refusal to sign the call made it manifest. I had heard of prominent men stating publicly that they would fall in with the majority, and in my simplicity supposed that they meant what they said, and never knew the contrary till I found myself spitted on the sharp end of a broken-down call, there to writhe amid the jeers of men whom, up to that time, I had counted as my friends.

I may state just here, what is generally known, that on finding the call almost entirely one-sided, I was prepared at the meeting of Presbytery at which it was presented to decline it, believing then and now that I could have done so in such way as would have satisfied my friends, and afforded them an honourable way out of the difficult position into which they had been drawn. But such opportunity the Presbytery saw fit to refuse me.

But the business was not yet ended: The majority signing the call felt aggrieved, and Fort Massey congregation was in danger. It may well be supposed—after all that had passed—that I should have preferred any other spot

on God's earth to Halifax, and my name to be used in any other connection than that of the new church. Still, I felt a moral responsibility, with respect to my friends, which I dared not disregard. Rightly or wrongly I believed that the future peace and prosperity of Fort Massey congregation depended more on my action than that of any other man,—and though misunderstood and slandered, I resolved to do anything and everything in my power to prevent a separation between the parties then unhappily formed. Hence, when the proposal was made to revive the call on the part of the minority, I felt that if the use of my name in that connection would afford an opportunity for some kind of concession by the opposing party, and form a meeting place for both, I dare not refuse to allow it to be so used. That scheme broke down. Then a crisis came;—Resolutions authorizing separation were passed; the Chalmers' section were prepared to take the church at its full cost, and carry it. The suggestion was then made: suppose the other party decline either to buy or sell and refuse to retire, how would you regard "Another call?" I said that, after all that has passed, no earthly consideration would induce me to allow my name to be used as a candidate in the ordinary sense;—but if it be distinctly understood on both sides and all round, from the beginning and all through, that I am simply passive, and that when the call comes up, it shall be a matter for the Presbytery to decide, then, if they see fit to translate me to the new congregation, I am ready to go. The Trustees met, and the minority did in effect refuse to retire. Then the proposal to unite in calling me on the understanding that was referred to was made, and as I understood was agreed to by the Trustees, and afterwards by the parties respectively, and for a little time, the difficulty seemed in a fair way to an honorable settlement.

Then came a call from a congregation in Boston. That call assumed a phase which made me feel morally bound



to accept it. Still more, from indications appearing on every hand, I saw clearly that the minority in Fort Massey did not regard the ground of united action as my friends did,—there was either a misunderstanding or an entire breach of faith—and the proposal must miscarry. Feeling assured of this, I intimated to my friends my determination to leave the city, unless prevented by the Presbytery, and made my arrangements accordingly. The Presbytery met, I explained my position, my resignation was accepted, and I was set free to accept the call to Boston. This ends my connection with Fort Massey. Strange, it does seem to me, that the period of my life of greatest self-denial and self-sacrifice for the cause of Christ, should be the very time when I have been put down as cringing, self-seeking and ambitious ; but so it is,—and my appeal is made from man's judgment to that of the Searcher of Hearts.

I might trace my connection with the old Chalmers' congregation, and prove by indisputable facts that the charge of slighting and despising them in the day of trial and weakness is a vile slander. I might also point in detail to most interesting Providential leadings in connection with the call from Boston, which I have accepted ; but this paper is already too long. From scenes of worry, tumult and excitement I go in God's Providence to another branch of the church,—to another land, and to another flag. What things await me there I know not. I leave Halifax with regret. Here I have spent two happy years in the service of the best of Masters ; here I have found Christians, who, intellectually, socially and spiritually are among the noblest, sweetest and best that I have met ; here I have made friends, kind, forbearing, tried and true. For all their acts of kindness, sympathy and generosity, I would record my lasting gratitude. May God heal the breaches of Zion.

**EDWARD ANNAND.**

*Halifax, May 8, 1872.*